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A comparison of women's portrayals in U.S. and Taiwanese magazine advertisements

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**A COMPARISON OF WOMEN'S PORTRAYALS IN U.S. AND TAIWANESE
MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of School of Journalism and Mass Communications

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Shan-Hui Hsiung

December 1997

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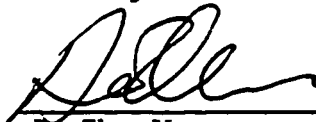
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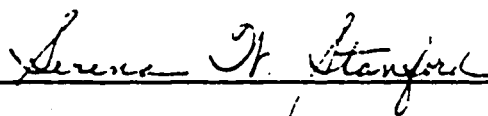


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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF WOMEN'S PORTRAYALS IN U.S. AND TAIWANESE MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

by Shan-Hui Hsiung

Through a content analysis of U.S. and Taiwanese magazine advertisements, this cross-cultural study examined female roles in 1990s' advertisements as compared to women's portrayals shown in the 1980s. The basic assumption behind this study is that cultural differences play important roles in determining how women are portrayed in the two countries.

The findings revealed that more female models than male models were shown in both U.S. and Taiwanese advertising. Also, the similarity between U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements was found in the type of role portrayed by women. Women in both countries were more likely to appear in non-working roles than working roles. However, women's portrayals in U.S. advertisements differed from those in Taiwanese advertisements in the type of working roles, non-working roles and female models' dress. In addition, the comparison between 1985 and 1995 revealed an increase in working women portrayals in Taiwanese advertisements. Further, female models' dress has become more seductive in both U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements, with surprisingly, Taiwan having a higher percentage of seductive dress than the United States.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Since the late 1960s, the portrayal of female in mass media advertising has been a popular concern. The concern focuses on whether advertising reflects women's roles in reality or stresses stereotypical roles that no longer exist (DeYoung & Crane, 1992). Most academic research shows that women are portrayed in a limited and disparaging status, especially as sexual objects (Balkaoui & Balkaoui 1976; Courtney & Whipple 1983; Ferguson, Kreshel, & Tinkham, 1990; LaTour & Henthorne, 1994; Lysonski & Pollay, 1990).

Advertising, like other forms of mass communication, is deeply related to culture (Chang, 1992). The cultural aspect is a particularly important element in advertising communications, since communication is so closely tied to cultural norms and practices. Moreover, as a form of social communication, advertising is considered to be particularly reflective of culture (Hong, Muderrisoglu, & Zinkhan, 1987). In addition, since cultural values influence advertising, advertising is expected to be somewhat reflective of a culture's sex role norms (Gilly, 1988). Advertising ought to reflect a culture's norms regarding appropriate roles for women (Sengupta, 1995).

Because attitudes toward appropriate roles for women differ among cultures (Hawkins & Coney, 1976), differences among countries can be expected in portrayals of women in advertising. Therefore, based on the belief that advertising reflects a society's

perception of appropriate sex roles, this study examines women's portrayals across cultures.

The present study examines the influence of culture on portrayals of women in advertising by examining magazine advertisements from the United States and Taiwan. Comparisons should suggest the effect of different culture values on advertising's depiction of women.

This cross-cultural study is important because few studies deal with the comparison of female roles in advertising across nations. While the portrayal of women in American advertising has come under heavy scrutiny for more than two decades, most female roles in advertisements outside the United States are ignored. Also, the present study can be an indicator to see how female roles are interpreted in terms of culture.

Statement of the Problem

In modern times, women worldwide have a lower status than men (Basow, 1992). Female subordination is found universally (Ortner, 1974). One would therefore expect this fact to be reflected in advertising of all countries, including the U.S. and Taiwan. However, the "treatment of women and their relative power and contribution vary enormously from culture to culture" (Ortner, 1974, p. 67). Hence, attitudes toward women's roles might be found different among countries.

After the first wave of American feminism to advocate women's suffrage as well as other reforms, the second emerged in 1963 with Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine*

Mystique (Kimball, 1981). American feminists have been engaged in the fight for women's rights and equality for a long time.

In the U.S. the women's movement has endeavored to raise the consciousness of men and women alike, and in recent years strides have been made in passing new laws. However, since the Reagan administration the movement has experienced a setback, and recent events, such as the Clarence Thomas hearings and the William Kennedy Smith and Mike Tyson trials, remind us that we still have a long way to go toward attaining the ideal of sexual equality in this country (Chia, Moore, Lam, Chuang, & Cheng, 1994).

Compared with the long history of American feminism, the history of Taiwanese feminism is no more than three decades. With the influence of global feminism, Taiwan's women movement began in the 1970s (Chang, 1994). The women's liberation movement was slow to develop in Taiwan, which suggests that women in Taiwan would be more traditional than American women.

Taiwanese culture places great value on Chinese culture, since it was settled by Chinese. In China, male dominance is firmly entrenched (Hofstede, 1980; Lee, 1984). As recently as the last century, such practices as foot binding and the fact that a widow could not marry again, but a man could have a wife and several concubines at the same time, were the rule rather than the exception. Girls were not allowed to go "out" to school; only the few lucky ones from wealthy families could be tutored at home. And women were not allowed to work except as wet nurses, maids, or cooks, always within the family setting. Chinese women have a long history of being submissive and obedient

to the men in their lives: father, then husband, then son (Chia, Moore, Lam, Chuang, & Cheng, 1994). The hierarchy in China from high to low in the relationship between male and female was also transferred to Taiwan's society.

The same sexist structure also exists in Japanese society. In Japan, women are viewed as inferior to men (Sengupta, 1995). The discriminatory view of women has also been transferred to Taiwan since the colonization of Taiwan by the Japanese in 1895.

In Taiwan, rapid westernized industrialization in the past thirty years has made it the economic miracle and showcase of Southeast Asia. Taiwan's chief trading partner is the U.S. Taiwan also sends many students to the U.S. for advanced study. Consequently, many new societal orders are modeled after those of the U.S., not only at the basic physical level of housing, clothing, food habits, and so forth, but at the institutional level of education and government, as well as at the personal level of basic attitudes and values. While girls not only go to school and usually excel, women do work outside the family (Chia, Moore, Lam, Chuang, & Cheng, 1994). However, although women's status in Taiwan has changed much over the years, sexual inequality still prevails. For example, there are no female presidents at the national universities, and although there are a few female CEOs in Taiwan today, the real power still resides in the hands of fathers and husbands (Chia, Moore, Lam, Chuang, & Cheng).

Since different cultures assert different definitions of sex role (Basow, 1984), it is interesting to examine how advertising reflects the difference of sex roles in society. The purpose of this study is to examine the roles of women depicted in Taiwanese magazine

advertising and compare those roles to those of women in magazine advertising in the United States. Moreover, this study did a historical comparison to see the changes of women's portrayals from the 1980s to the 1990s in Taiwanese and U.S. advertisements. The differences or similarities of women's portrayals between Taiwanese advertising and American advertising were discussed in the present study.

It has been found that female models appeared more often than male models in advertisements from Taiwan (Chang, 1994; Lee & Lin, 1995; Tao, 1991; Wu, 1995). However, more male models than female models were favored by U.S. advertisements (Iijima Hall & Crum, 1994; Lee & Lin, 1995). Hence, it is interesting to examine advertisements from Taiwan and the United States to see what sex of model is shown more often in the 1990s.

The previous studies (Tao, 1991; Wu, 1995) indicated that more non-working women than working women were found in 1990s' advertisements in Taiwan, but there has been an increase in the use of working roles portrayed by women in advertisements from the United States (Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1976; Sullivan & O'Connor, 1988). Thus, the present study compares the relationship between the type of role portrayed by women in advertisements and the country in which advertisements appeared. Taiwanese and U.S. advertisements were analyzed to see what type of role (working/non-working) is shown more often in the 1990s.

Since the 1970s there has been a decline in the endorsement of traditional roles of wife and mother in both Taiwanese and U.S. society, while more and more working

women have participated in the nation's work force (Bloom, 1986; Hare-Mustin, Bennett, & Broderick, 1983; Hinkelman, 1994; Townsend, 1996). It is interesting to see if advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. can reflect the change of women's roles in society. Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. from the 1980s to the 1990s were examined to see if more and more working roles portrayed by women have been shown.

The present study duplicated the coding categories used by Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) to see the differences or similarities in working roles portrayed by women in advertisements between the U.S. and Taiwan. In addition, Courtney and Lockeretz's categories (1971) were also used to see if types of non-working roles portrayed by women in Taiwanese advertisements differed from those in U.S. advertisements.

Since women in general are more sexually liberated in the United States than they are in Taiwan, it is interesting to see if there is a significant difference in the number of women wearing seductive clothes in advertisements from these two countries. Female models' clothing in advertisements was examined to see if more seductive dress was found in U.S. advertisements than in Taiwanese advertisements.

Soley and Kurzbad (1986) found that the sexual element in advertisements was more visual and the illustrations more overt in 1984 than 1964. Moreover, Ferguson et al. (1990) analyzed advertisements in *Ms.* magazine and found that the portrayal of women as alluring sex objects had increased over a period of fifteen years. Hence, this study attempted to determine whether the proportionate increase in sexual content that

was found for the eighties is occurring in the nineties. Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. were examined to see if there was an increase in the use of women wearing seductive clothes in advertisements from the 1980s to the 1990s.

The basic assumption behind this study is that cultural values play important roles in determining how women are portrayed in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements. Hence, to reveal the influence of cultural values on portrayals of women, the present study examined women's portrayals in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in terms of the number of women appearing in advertisements, the roles that women play, and the dress worn by women.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The Role of Women in the United States

According to Kava and Bodin (1983), in the 1930s and during the Second World War, a large number of American women were employed; however, the uncertainties and difficulties of the depression and the war made women want to go back to normal lives, which meant making the home their central concern. By 1950, one-half of all women were married by the age of 20, and they were twice as likely to have more than three children than women twenty years earlier. Among college students, women students dropped from 47% in 1920 to 35% in 1958 (Kava & Bodin, 1983).

Publication of *The Feminine Mystique* (Frieden, 1963) marked the beginning of a new wave of feminism. Hence, feminism revived in the 1960s with a revival of the Equal Rights Movement. Legal equality with men was only one of the feminist goals of this time. Most of the goals called for a reexamination of women's relationships with men and with other women (Becker, 1981). In 1963, the Federal Government passed the Equal Pay Act. That legislation was followed by the Civil Rights Act in 1964, which was later revamped with the Equal Employment Opportunities of 1972. Meanwhile, in 1966 the National Organization for women was formed and its Bill of Rights called for sweeping changes, such as banning sex discrimination, providing maternity leave

benefits and childcare centers and giving women control over their reproductive lives (Kava & Bodin, 1983).

Since the 1970s there has been a decline in the endorsement of traditional roles in society, and women appear to define independence in terms of roles other than those of wife and mother (Hare-Mustin et al., 1983). Since the late 1970s, occupational status has become a part of the identity of American women (Bankart, 1989). Nearly 52 million women were working in 1986, a 200% increase over figures at the end of Second World War (Bloom, 1986). However, the dramatic shifts in women's work outside the home do not appear to have been accompanied by an equally impressive improvement in the relative economic status of women workers. In 1982, 71% of male white-collar workers were in either professional/technical or managerial jobs, whereas only 38% of female white-collar workers were in these categories. Furthermore, while a somewhat higher proportion of women than men were employed as professional or technical workers, over half of the women in this category were concentrated in the traditionally female fields of librarian, registered nurse, preschool, elementary, or secondary school teacher, and social worker. A substantial 52% of female white-collar workers were working in clerical jobs (Freeman, 1984).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistical projections, women age 45 to 54 will account for more than one-third of all net additions to the nation's work force between 1994 and 2005 (Townsend, 1996). In addition, a pioneering generation of American women has already begun to attain top positions in the nation's largest corporations.

Although no Fortune 500 company boasts a female CEO today, a number of women have been progressing in big business in recent years. "At the apex of corporate decision-making, women now hold about 10% of seats on boards of directors of Fortune 500 corporations, according to the *1995 Catalyst Census of Female Directors*" (Townsend, 1996, p. 30). Eighty-one percent of these companies had at least one woman on their boards in 1995, up from 69% in 1993. Moreover, companies are moving beyond the tokenism of a single female director; 165 of the Fortune 500 now have two or more women on their boards (Townsend).

Women are for the first time attaining the most senior levels in corporate America. Forty-four percent of the women either report directly to the CEO or are one reporting level away, and 81% of the women are within two levels of the CEO. The largest number hold the title of vice president or senior vice president. One-fifth occupy a variety of even more senior positions, including president, executive vice president, chief financial officer, and general counsel.

Although women are becoming visible at the top of corporate ladders, few female executives head core business areas such as sales and marketing functions, manufacturing plants, and major operating divisions. Women in the executives ranks are overrepresented in staff support functions such as communications, human resources, and legal affairs.

Despite the steady increase of women in corporate management in the past 25 years, 6 in 10 American women still believe that women suffer discrimination in

obtaining executive positions in business, according to the 1995 Virginia Slims Opinion Poll. In fact, more women hold this view than in 1970, when just half of women concurred. Townsend (1996) pointed out that this increased perception of discrimination might reflect society's growing sensitivity to subtle forms of bias toward diverse groups of all kinds.

In sum, working roles have gradually replaced traditional roles for women. There has been a general decline in the societal endorsement of the traditional role for women, and women in the United States have made rapid strides in the workplace. Nevertheless, their status is still not equal to that of men. Sex discrimination still can not be avoided in U.S. society.

The Role of Women in Taiwan

Prior to the colonization of Taiwan by Japanese in 1895, the traditional Confucian doctrine was abided by Taiwanese women. Women had no recourse in divorce, but husbands could easily rid themselves of wives. A woman could leave her husband's family only if she repaid the bride price, her own family took her back, and she left the children with the husband's family (Natalie & Robinson, 1975). According to Takekoshi (1907), Taiwanese husband could sell their wives for disobedience, unfaithfulness, or poverty.

Dutch culture also influenced Taiwanese culture in the early stage. In 1623 the Dutch East India Company secured an agreement with Chinese officials in Fukien to settle Taiwan for commercial purposes. They remained in control of the island only until

1662, but during that brief interval they introduced Christianity, the Dutch language, and most importantly, schools which were attended by native women. Married women in Taiwan also had the right to own paddy fields, tea fields, and other property and to will property to their children (Natalie & Robinson, 1975).

By the mid-nineteenth century Spanish Catholic and Canadian Presbyterian missionaries were making their influence felt on the island. Spanish priests were reported to have cared for 5,000 to 6,000 female children and Presbyterian missionaries educated women as bible workers. These efforts, although small, must have created a climate in which it was possible for women to deviate from the traditional.

In an attempt to assimilate Taiwanese people and to integrate Taiwan culturally into the Japanese empire, a considerable number of schools were established by Japanese government. By 1945 over 1,000 primary schools were in operation. The curriculum emphasized Japanese language, Japanese history, and the loyalty to the emperor. Girls as well as boys were allowed to attend these schools. However, as Japanese considered education merely a tool for assimilation, there was little commitment to higher education for Taiwanese students.

Because of the traditional Chinese reluctance to educate women and the Japanese efforts to prevent the development of an intellectual elite, Taiwan lacked a group of dedicated professional women.

Japan's emphasis on agricultural development and its particular method of governing Taiwan reinforced traditional family patterns and contributed to the

maintenance of traditional female roles in Taiwan. The decision to utilize Taiwan as rice basket for the empire kept women in a rural environment, working within the home and assisting in the fields. In 1930, only 5% of women between the age of 25 and 34 reported working in something other than agriculture. Most of these women produced handicrafts within the home or worked in tea factories (Barclay, 1954).

Although Japanese attempted to eliminate the most oppressive traditions, banning footbinding in 1910, prohibiting child marriages, and granting the right of divorce and remarriage to women, women were denied political, social, and economic equality (Natalie & Robinson, 1975). The transfer of Taiwan to the Nationalists in 1945 substantially improved the position of Taiwanese women. Legal equality was extended to the women with the promulgation of the 1947 Constitution. Article 7 states: "All citizens of the Republic of China, irrespective of sex, religion, race, class, or party affiliation shall be equal before the law." Women were also given the right to vote (Natalie & Robinson).

In the 1970s, women in Taiwan constituted 27% of the total work force (Chien, 1975). They represented 38% of all factory workers, 32% of sales clerks, and 30% of clerical workers (Diamond, 1973). Women were 7% of government employees, 20% of doctors, 3% of lawyers, 40% of teachers, and 32% of telecommunications workers. They also represented close to half of unpaid family workers in Taiwan (Chien, 1975). The new Basic Labor Standard Law signed in the spring of 1975 offered considerable protection to this female work force (Natalie & Robinson, 1975).

As a result of the heavy emphasis played by the Nationalist government on education in Taiwan, women have benefited from the compulsory nine years of schooling required by law. In 1974, 26,239 of the 61,925 students attending universities were women as were 755 of the 1,966 students allowed to study abroad (Natalie & Robinson, 1975). Although in the 1970s increasing numbers of women were reaching higher levels in the educational system, they still represented 1,266,500 of the 1,741,470 illiterate population (Natalie & Robinson). Moreover, the lack of opportunity in the professions and the administrative and managerial levels of the society produced the same frustrations experienced by educated women in all nations where advancement is limited (Natalie & Robinson).

The women's movement sprouted in the 1970s to condemn the sexist structure of Taiwanese society. However, this movement to challenge the conventional attitudes and ideologies in Taiwanese society was not supported by the majority of men and women in Taiwan. Women's movement in Taiwan had not been paid attention until 1987. Women's rights and equality in politics, economy and society were advocated eagerly in accompany with social movement in 1987 (Chang, 1994).

In 1991, Taiwanese women made up 38% of the work force, while men made up 62% of the work force in Taiwan. Women accounted for an especially large percentage of university graduates in Taiwan, reflecting the prevailing tendency toward equal opportunity and the government's emphasis on using all the nation's available human resources. According to the survey conducted by United Nations, Taiwan was ranked as

the first in Asia and twelfth in the world in the number and percentage of women with undergraduate and graduate degrees. This suggested that approximately 46% of all women in Taiwan have received some form of higher education. However, while gender has no limiting effect on school admission, women are still uncommon in management positions (Hinkelman, 1994).

A study on wage discrimination in Taiwan (Gannicott, 1986) found that females received lower earnings than males for the same experience, firm size, and marital status. Although the law requires equal pay for men and women, Business International reported in 1992 that management positions are occupied for the most part by men, who earn about 30% to 40% more than women. Although over 41% of all professionals in 1990 were women, only 9% were managers.

In general, Taiwanese women still can not avoid discriminative treatment in work force, they are generally thought of as unassertive, lacking in self confidence and leadership skills, and not tough enough to handle the business environment (Tang, 1992).

Although the younger generation in Taiwan has been exposed to the U.S. and other Western cultures and has been quick to adopt a more westernized view, Taiwan is still greatly influenced by its Confucian upbringing (Wilén & Wilén, 1995). A 1991 study of female university students in Taiwan showed them to be more self-effacing than males in Taiwan or U.S. females (Crittenden, 1991). Women in Taiwan tend to adhere to the Chinese cultural value of modesty and to the qualities and gender-role stereotypes of

women as being socially responsible and congenial but relatively incompetent in comparison with men (Wilén & Wilén, 1995).

In sum, women in Taiwan have perceived a tremendous improvement in their position, but there is still much that remains to be done. Taiwanese women have joined the work force in increasing numbers, but the status of working women in general is inferior to that of men. The traditional Chinese culture to view women inferior to men still can not be discarded in Taiwanese society.

Portrayals of Women in U.S. Advertising

Since the women's movement, advertisements have shown an increase in images of women as professionals; however, they have also shown an increase in the attention to sexuality present in the advertisements. When advertisements have progressively represented women as members of the work force, they also have maintained traditional stereotypes of women as sex objects in underlying messages within these advertisements.

The attention of Courtney and Lockeretz's study (1971) was concentrated on comparing the occupational and non-working roles of men and women as portrayed in advertisements. Magazines directed toward both male and female readers were analyzed for stereotypes. The findings of this study showed that print advertisements rarely showed women in working roles. These advertisements failed to show the true range of women's roles within American society. The authors concluded that there were several female stereotypes found in advertisements: (a) a women's place is in the home, (b) women do not make important decisions or do important things, (c) women are

dependent and need men's protection, and (d) men regard women primarily as sexual objects; they are not interested in women as people.

A follow-up analysis of the roles portrayed by women in magazine advertisements was conducted by Wagner and Banos (1973). During the 20-month period since Courtney-Lockeretz study of magazine advertisements was made, the percentage of advertisements portraying women in a working role has more than doubled. This follow-up study indicated that there has been a substantial improvement in emphasizing women's expanding role as a working member of society in a relatively short period of time.

The images of women in network TV commercials were examined in Dominick and Rauch's study (1972). There were two purposes in this study: (a) to describe how women are portrayed in television ads, and how their portrayal contrasts with that of men; and (b) to examine the criticisms made by feminist writers in the lights of systematic content analysis.

Among the 986 advertisements coded, were 381 ads featuring women, while women were absent in the remaining 605. Further analysis revealed that 75% of all ads using females were for products generally found in the kitchen or bathroom. Only 56% of the ads without females were for products in this category. Moreover, of the 946 ads with a voice-over, only 6% used a female voice. A male voice was heard on 87% and 7% used both. When occupations of women were examined, this study found that 7 out of 10 females held a job of a subservient nature. These ads also mirrored the restricted range

of jobs open to females in real life. Forty-three different occupations were coded for men, yet for females the corresponding figure was just 18. In this study, the most frequent role recorded was that of sex object/decoration. Some 32% of the females were in this role. The wife/mother characterization was next in frequency with 20% of the female judged to be in this category. The authors concluded that “women are most often seen as decorative (sex objects) or useful (housewives and mothers), but hardly ever as professionals or working wives” (p. 259).

Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976) compared women’s portrayals in print advertisements in 1958 with that in 1970 and 1972. The authors analyzed women’s portrayals in a sample of advertisements drawn from eight magazines published in 1958, a full 10 years before the feminist movement mobilization. Moreover, the results of this analysis were compared with those of similarly designed 1970 study by Courtney and Lockeretz and 1972 study by Wagner and Banos to determine the extent to which stereotypes have been maintained and reinforced, and to determine the degree of social change with regard to women’s roles as reflected in advertising messages.

The authors found that in 1958’s advertisements, most women were portrayed in the following stereotypes which reflected the prevailing viewpoint toward females in North American society of the late 1950s: (a) women as unemployed, (b) women as low income earners, (c) non-working women in decorative roles and idle situations, and (d) women have limited purchasing power. Moreover, comparison of 1958’s ads with those of 1970 and 1972 suggested that some of the portrayals prevalent in 1958 have remained

as the stereotypes of the 1970s. The results of the comparison suggested that men continued to be associated with big ticket items while women take care of their homes and their personal appearance with predominantly household and beauty-related buying decisions. Although the number of working roles increased from 13% in 1958 to 21% in 1972, no women were portrayed in professional roles in either 1958's or 1970's ads. Moreover, the images of non-working women have shifted from family roles in 1958 to more decorative roles in 1972.

Soley and Kurzbard (1986) analyzed sexual portrayals in general interest, women's and men's magazine advertisements during 1964 and 1984. The results included: (a) the percentage of ads with sexual content remained constant, but the absolute number of ads, including ads containing sexual elements, increased in the average issue of the studied magazines during the twenty-year time interval; (b) general-interest magazines have shown a marked increase in sexually oriented ads but women's and men's magazines have not; (c) sexual illustrations have become more overt; (d) when sexual elements are present, they are more likely to be visual than verbal and that this tendency has increased over time; and (e) female models are more likely to be portrayed as suggestively clad, partially clad or nude than male models.

Content analysis was used to study the changing nature of women's role portrayals from 1958 to 1983 (Sullivan & O'Connor 1988). Advertisements appearing in eight general interest periodicals during November 1983 were compared with data from similar studies of magazines published during 1958 and 1970. Results indicated that

1980s' advertisements in some ways more accurately reflect the true diversity of women's social and occupational roles than do those of earlier time periods.

The authors restated and contrasted the stereotypes generated by Courtney and Lockeretz: (a) "A women's place is in the home." Strictly speaking, this is false. Instead, there has been an increased propensity to depict women as employed. Advertisements in 1983 were more than twice as likely to portray women as employed as advertisements in 1970, which were only slightly down from the 1958 figure. (b) "Women do not make important decisions or do important things." As noted, there has been an increase in women shown in working roles. (c) "Women are dependent and need men's protection." The 1983 study result proved contradictory. Many ads depicted an image of independence of women. While most ads did contain men, they were not overseeing the activities of women. (d) "Men regard women primarily as sexual objects; they are not interested in women as people." However, this study showed that ads in 1983 more commonly depicted men and women relating to each other as equals mutually enjoying recreational activities.

Ferguson et al. (1990) analyzed portrayals of women in advertising pages of *Ms.* magazine during its first fifteen full years of publication, 1973-1987. Three measuring categories used in this study were (a) a "Decorative" rather than functional role of the women in relation to the product; (b) a "Traditional Appearance," being judged in terms of societal norms; and (c) an "Alluring Appearance" of the women, interpreted as

enticing the consumer into liking or using the product. In addition, the scale for sexism employed by Pingree, Hawkins, Bulter, and Paisley (1976) was also utilized. Level I "sex object" and Level II "keep her in her place" were considered respectively to characterize high and moderate levels of sexism. Level III through level V of the scale for sexism were combined as the final dimension. This last dimension included portrayals featuring women in multiple roles at once, as fully equal professionals, or in a completely non-stereotyped role.

The researchers grouped the time period in the history of *Ms.* into three approximately five-year segments to see the trends of women's portrayals in the advertising pages of *Ms.* The findings of this study indicated that there was a significant decrease in the "Decorative" role portrayal over the three time periods. In the early years, 82% of the role portrayals were decorative. However, the analogous proportion was only 32% in the most recent period. The incidence of "Traditional" role portrayals did not exhibit a significantly negative trend. In contrast to the decline in decorative role portrayals, the incidence of "Alluring" images increased significantly over time.

The findings of this study also showed that the proportion of advertisements representing the highest level of sexism "sex object" increased during *Ms.*'s publication history (15% to 38%) between the early and recent years of publication. However, the incidence of Level II of the scale for sexism declined over time. In the period of 1973-1977, 46% of the ads portrayed the "keep her in her place" role. This percentage

declined to only 13% in the most recent time period. When one considered Level III, IV, and V together, the pattern over time did not change as markedly. Note that the early years (1973-1977) represented the lowest proportion (39%) of “low sexist” role portrayal of the three time periods. Due to the proportionate decrease in the “keep her in her place” role portrayal, and the corresponding increase observed in the “sex objects” role portrayal, level of sexism was observed to vary significantly over time.

To understand how women and men, when pictured together, are portrayed, Klassen, Jasper, and Schwartz (1993) analyzed advertisements in *Ms.*, *Playboy* and *Newsweek*. Unlike most previous studies, the focus of this study was not on the specific individual roles depicted in advertisements. Rather, the interest here was in subtler visual cues in ads involving female-male relationship. The results of this study showed that traditional depictions of women have been decreasing since the early 1980s and that “equality portrayals” are on the rise. The findings of this study indicated that of the three magazines examined, *Ms.* had a significantly higher proportion of ads with reverse-sex poses as compared with *Playboy* and *Newsweek*. In the past, *Ms.* magazine remained consistent with its advertising philosophy to use ads that promoted sexual equality and that did not depict women in traditional images. In regard to *Playboy* and *Newsweek*, the results indicated that the magazines have included more traditional portrayals of women and fewer equality depictions of women and men together in their advertisements during the past 18 years. However, inconsistent with its image is the relatively recent trend in

Playboy toward decreased use of advertisements with traditional portrayals of women and increased use of ads showing women and men as equals.

Iijima Hall and Crum's study (1994) examined how women were portrayed in television beer commercials. Each beer commercial was coded on the following items: (a) the number of males and females appearing in the commercial, (b) the type of apparel worn, and (c) the number of "body-isms," the number of camera shots focusing on chest, buttocks, legs, and crotch. The results of this study showed that there were significantly more men than women in the commercials coded. While the types of clothing were discussed, leisure attire appeared in the greatest number of ads for both gender. However, the next most frequently appearing attire for males was that of a blue-collar worker, but swimwear was the second most frequently occurring attire for women. Of the four types of body camera shots examined, chest shots were the most frequently observed for both male and female characters. However, women's chests were seen twice as many times as men's.

Though women appear less often than men, their bodily exposure is greater. That is, of the smaller of women who appear in beer commercials, the number of camera shots of their bodies is greater than those of men.

Portrayals of Women in Taiwanese Advertising

As female models are shown more frequently, female models are more favored than male models in Taiwanese advertising. And among those female models, non-

working roles are shown more often than working roles. Although not many sex objects are found in Taiwanese ads, women are depicted more often than men as sex objects in advertising.

Tao (1991) analyzed women's roles in Taiwanese magazines from 1981 to 1990. Within the 10 years, she found that, in general, advertisers in Taiwan prefer female models to male models. More female roles were found in advertising than male roles. While male models accounted for 26% of the magazine advertisements analyzed and the combination of male and female models accounted for 21%, 53% of portrayals were female models. Hence, Tao concluded that female models were more favored than male models by advertisers.

This study also indicated that more non-working women were shown in advertisements than working women. Compared with the percentage of non-working women appearing in advertisements (86%), the percentage of working women is low (14%). Moreover, the use of sexual object was also analyzed in this study. Tao found that not many sexual objects were found in magazine advertisements. Depicting women as sexual objects only accounted for 14% in advertisements analyzed.

Tao also examined women's roles in advertisements by using the scale for sexism employed by Pingree et al. (1976). Four levels constituted this scale. Level I can be characterized as "put her down." In this level, women are depicted as being less than people, a two-dimensional image. Level II can be characterized as "keep her in her place." Women's places are in the home or in womanly occupations. Level III is

characterized as “give her two places.” Women may be professional, but their first place is home. Level IV acknowledges that “she is fully equal.” In level IV, women and men must be equals. And level V is non-stereotyped. Individual women and men are viewed as superior to each other in some respects, inferior in other respects. The dogmatism of level IV (women shall be equal to men) is unnecessary, because individuals are not judged by their sex. When this scale was used in analyzing women’s roles in Taiwanese magazine advertisements, most women’s roles fell in level II (69%). And the use of level I to portray women accounted for 27%. Therefore, Tao concluded that women’s roles in Taiwanese advertisements were still limited in stereotyped images.

Another study, conducted by Chang (1994), examined women’s portrayals in Taiwanese magazine advertisements from 1987 to 1992. The findings of this study indicated that among the 415 advertisements examined, female models were shown in 221 advertisements, while male models were shown in 99 advertisements and the combination of male and female models were shown in 95 advertisements. In addition, the use of sex objects was also examined in this study. While 55 advertisements depicted women as sex objects, only four advertisements portrayed men as sex objects.

Like Tao’s study (1991), Chang also used the consciousness scale for sexism to analyze women’s roles. It was found that the majority of women’s portrayals was limited in level II (64%), and level I (29%).

Chang’s study analyzed not only the overall women’s roles in advertisements but the interaction between women’s roles and types of magazines. The results of this

analysis showed that there was a trend to use sex objects in women's magazines. Compared with the percentage in men's and general interests magazines (10% and 5%), the percentage to use women as sex objects in women's magazines was high (29%). Moreover, the scale for sexism was also used in the interaction between women's roles and types of magazines. Compared with men's (19) and general-interest magazines (52), the number of advertisements to portray women in level II in women's magazines was large (102).

Wu (1995) examined women's roles in magazine advertisements from 1987 to 1994. Advertisements in men's and women's magazines were examined. The findings of this study showed that female models were shown more often than male models. Women accounted for 68% of the advertisements examined, while men only accounted for 32%. However, male models were favored by men's magazines, while female models were favored by women's magazines. Male models accounted for 80% in men's magazines, but only 20% of female models were found in men's magazines. Also, female models accounted for 95% in women's magazines, but male models only accounted for 5%.

The use of sex objects in advertising was also examined in this study. It was found that while 38% of women were depicted as sex objects, the use of men as sex objects only accounted for 7%. In addition, working role was also analyzed. The findings showed that more working men were found in advertisements than working

women. While 48% of men were portrayed as working roles, working women only accounted for 18%.

The scale for sexism was also used in Wu's study. Not only did the majority of women's portrayals fall in level II (47%), but the male portrayals (77%) did as well.

The study (1995), conducted by Lee and Lin, analyzed the combinations of models in U.S. and Taiwanese television commercials. The findings of the study showed that "adult female only" accounted for 22% of the Taiwanese sample. But this category appeared in only 13% of U.S. commercials. Also the "adult male and female" combination appeared in 25% of U.S. ads, while this accounted for 14% of Taiwanese advertising. In addition, "adult male only" accounted for 20% of U.S. commercials, but in only 12% of Taiwanese advertising. In short, Taiwanese advertising had more adult female models, while American advertising had more adult males and adult male and female models.

Research Questions

The basic assumption behind this research is that cultural differences play important roles in determining how women are portrayed in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements. Hence, since women's roles in the United States are different from those in Taiwan in accordance with the literature examined by the researcher, the study assumed that women's portrayals in U.S. advertisements should be different from those in Taiwanese advertisements. Moreover, comparing the previous research examining women's portrayals in U.S. advertisements with that dealing with women's roles in

Taiwanese advertisements, the researcher found that there are differences in women's roles between U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements.

This study aims to address seven research questions to specify the assumption that there are differences in women's portrayals between U.S. advertisements and Taiwanese advertisements:

Question 1. What sex of model (male/female) is shown more often in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s?

Question 2. What type of role (working/non-working) portrayed by woman is shown more often in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s?

Question 3. From the 1980s to the 1990s have more and more working women appeared in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements?

Question 4. Do types of working women in Taiwanese advertisements differ from those in U.S. advertisements in the 1990s?

Question 5. Do types of non-working women in Taiwanese advertisements differ from those in U.S. advertisements in the 1990s?

Question 6. Is women's dress in U.S. advertisements more seductive than that in Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s?

Question 7. From the 1980s to the 1990s have more and more women worn seductive clothes in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements?

Chapter 3

Methodology

Content Analysis

Content analysis was used in this cross-cultural study to examine women's portrayals in magazine advertisements from the United States and Taiwan. Content analysis has been widely used to understand how culture impacts advertising communication strategies. This method provides a systematic technique to observe and analyze the overt communication behavior of selected communications (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991). Content analysis has been used by researchers frequently to examine sex roles (Lee & Lin, 1995). The present study followed previous studies' use of content analysis to compare the roles of women in Taiwanese advertising with those in U.S. advertising.

Sampling method. Three magazines from three different magazine categories were selected from the United States and from Taiwan. The U.S. magazines were *Time*, (news/general interest), *Redbook* (women's), and *Business Week* (business). The Taiwanese magazines consisted of *China Times Weekly* (news/general interest), *New Woman* (women's), and *Common Wealth* (business). *Redbook*, *Common Wealth* and *New Woman* are published monthly, whereas *Time*, *Business Week* and *China Times Weekly* are weekly magazines. In order for the weekly magazines to be comparable with the

monthly magazines, monthly issues of *Time*, *Business Week*, and *China Times Weekly* have to be created. To create a monthly issue, a random sample of the weekly magazine issues was used. For example, to obtain a random sample of *Time*, the first magazine issue of the month was coded for January, the second issue for February, and the third issue for March. This pattern for the monthly issues continued through December. This insured random selection.

To understand the changes of female roles in advertising from the 1980s to the 1990s, content analysis examined women's roles in magazine advertisements from Taiwan and the U.S. in the years of 1985 and 1995. The years of 1985 and 1995 were chosen because they represented the midpoint of the eighties and nineties. The current study examined print advertisements featuring women for similarities and differences of women's roles in Taiwan and in the U.S. The content of news magazine, women's and business magazines was analyzed in this study. All of the advertisements featuring women in each magazine were analyzed for their content.

Category construction. Each advertisement of a half page or more which included one or more adults was analyzed to determine the number and sex of all adults, type of role portrayed by women, and dress worn by female models. Advertisements showing children, teenagers and crowd scenes in which it is difficult to determine individual roles were excluded. The coding scheme used in the current study duplicated coding categories used in Courtney and Lockeretz's study (1971), and Soley and Kurzbach's study (1986). Characters in the advertisements were analyzed at five levels.

First, the number and sex of characters were calculated. Second, characters were analyzed for the type of role (working/non-working). Third, following Courtney and Lockeretz (1971), characters were analyzed for the type of working roles: high-level business, professional, entertainment/sports, middle-level business, non-professional white-collar, blue-collar, and other. Fourth, the classification scheme for non-working roles also used by Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) were used here: family, recreational, decorative and other. Fifth, type of dress followed Soley and Kurzbad's categories (1986): demure, seductive, partially clad, and nude. However, the category of "demure" was changed to the category of "typical dress" since demure dress has a much more specific and narrower meaning than typical dress. Moreover, the category of "can't tell" was added to the coding category. Hence, in the present study, type of dress worn by a female model was categorized as typical dress, seductive, partially clad, nude, and can't tell. Typical dress included formal dress, like gowns except expose cleavage or back, casual dress, like walking shorts, sportswear except swimsuits, loungewear, and company uniforms/work wear. Seductive dress included open blouses and shirts which expose chest areas, mini-skirts, "short shorts", tight clothing which accentuates the figure or middle inseam of trousers, full-length lingerie except where translucent, evening gowns which expose cleavage or back, "muscle shirts", and hiked skirts, exposing thighs. Partially clad models were defined as wearing bathingsuits, underapparel and three-quarter length or shorter lingerie, except where translucent, "close-ups," where the shoulders of the models were bare and photographs or illustrations of legs which

included the thigh, but displayed no clothing. Nudity was defined as unclothed bodies, including silhouettes, the wearing of translucent underapparel or lingerie, “medium shots,” where the models displayed no clothing or had only a towel over their shoulders and full shots where the model was unclad except for a towel. The category of “can’t tell” meant that it was difficult to tell the dress worn by models, like models who showed their faces only.

Courtney and Lockeretz’s coding categories for working and non-working roles (1971) were used in the present study. However, as Courtney and Lockeretz did not provide explanations for their categories, the present study adopted the explanation used by De Voe (1984).

In De Voe's study, she explained working roles as following:

High Level Business	An individual portrayed as a high ranking official in a business such as a President, Vice President, Controller, or Operations Manager.
Professional	One who was an expert in a field such as a Nurse, Chef, Doctor, Dentist, or a Newscaster.
Entertainment, Sports	A famous individual from the performing arts (theater, TV, music) or sports world (tennis, football, baseball) promotes a product.
Middle Level Business	The local Grocer, Sales Clerk, and Insurance Agent all represent this role.
Non Professional White Collar	This included Secretarial and Clerical roles.
Blue Collar	Individuals who were Ranch Hands, Construction Workers, or Oil Rig Workers.

De Voe also explained non-working activities as following:

Family	A female depicted as a wife, mother, grandmother, or a daughter.
Recreational	The female participating in a recreational activity, such as fishing, hiking, swimming, jogging, and camping.
Decorative	The female who appeared only as an adornment to an object. For example, a woman whose main function was to admire a model's outfit was considered in a decorative role. The female had no real function in the advertisement.

In a situation where a family was depicted in a recreational situation, the individual was recorded under the family category. If working and non-working females appeared together in an advertisement, they were coded into the separate categories of working and non-working activities. For example, if a doctor appeared with a woman and her family, the doctor was coded as a professional and the woman was coded under the family category.

Pretesting. Each advertisement was coded by the researcher. A second individual who can speak Mandarin as well as English assisted in coding the advertisements. To prevent ambiguous coding categories, a pretest was conducted with the coders individually coding the sub-sample of magazines' advertisements read prior to the main study. In the pretest, the inter-coder reliability coefficient, determined by using Scott's formula (Holsti, 1969) was found to be: 100 % for sex of the model, 89% for type of role, 97% for type of working role, 90% for type of non-working role, 85% for type of dress, and 92% for overall average.

Coder reliability. Inter-coder agreement was calculated for the coding of a sub-sample of magazines' advertisements. The researcher and a colleague analyzed 700 out of 7,158 advertisements individually to determine the intercoder reliability. The response was compared item-by-item and a percentage of agreement between coders was calculated. Scott's formula (Holsti, 1969) was also used to calculate the agreement: 100% for sex of the model, 100% for type of role, 100% for type of working role, 100% for type of non-working role, and 78% for type of dress. The average agreement was 96%.

Data Analysis

Chi-square was used by the researcher in the current study to analyze the results. However, because the chi-square distribution is sharply skewed for small sample, Type II error may occur. To avoid this problem, it is recommended that adjacent cells be

combined to get meaningful data if each category contains less than five observations.

Moreover, the adjacent cells should also be combined when 20% of the cells have expected values less than five, or some of the expected values are less than one (Wimmer & Dominick, 1987). Hence, in the present study while dress worn by a female model was analyzed, the categories of blue collar and other were combined into one category.

Chapter 4

Results

The researcher examined 7,158 advertisements, which were displayed in 144 issues of magazines. A total of 5,147 male and female models appeared in the issues of *Time*, *Businessweek*, *Redbook*, *China Times Weekly*, *Common Wealth*, and *New Woman* for the years of 1985 and 1995 (1,069 male and 1,176 female models for 1985 and 1,196 male and 1,706 female models for 1995). Chi-square analysis was performed on the distributions of female roles in the different categories.

To answer the first research question, what sex of model is shown more often in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s, the results revealed that female models were shown more often than male models in both U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements. More specifically, while female models accounted for 60% of portrayals in Taiwanese advertisements, 40% of models were males. Also, in U.S. advertisements, 57% of models were females, but 43% were males. Therefore, female models appear more often than male models in both U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s.

Comparing role portrayals of women in advertisements in the United States and Taiwan to answer the second research question, what type of role portrayed by woman is shown more often in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s, the researcher found that non-working women were shown more often than working women in both

Taiwanese and U.S. advertisements. As displayed in Table 1, working roles accounted for 27% of women portrayed in Taiwanese advertisements, with non-working roles slightly less than three times. Moreover, non-working women were roughly four times as many as working women in U.S. advertisements. However, although more non-working women than working women were found in both U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements, a chi-square test revealed a statistically significant relationship between the type of role (working/non-working) portrayed by woman and the countries in which advertisements appeared ($p < .01$). Proportionally, more working roles appeared in Taiwanese advertisements (27%) than U.S. advertisements (21%), and more non-working roles appeared in U.S. advertisements (79%) than Taiwanese advertisements (71%) (see Table 1).

The results showed that between 1985 and 1995 there was a significant increase in the use of working women in advertisements from Taiwan. Between 1985 and 1995, working women increased from 14% to 27%, while non-working women decreased from 86% to 73% (see Table 2). On the contrary, there was no evidence of a significant change in the type of role portrayed by women in advertisements from the United States between 1985 and 1995 ($p > .05$). More specifically, the percentage of working women increased from 19% to 21% between 1985 and 1995 in U.S. advertisements, while that of non-working women decreased from 81% to 79%. Thus, in response to the third research question, whether more working women appeared in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements, the results showed that while more and more female models were portrayed as working

women in advertisements from Taiwan from the 1980s to the 1990s, there was no significant fluctuation in the use of working women in U.S. advertisements.

For advertisements in 1995, a chi-square test indicated that there were significant differences between the two countries in the type of working roles portrayed by women ($p < .001$). Working women in Taiwanese advertisements were much more likely than those in U.S. advertisements to appear in entertainment roles. It was found that 51% of the working women were portrayed as entertainment roles in Taiwanese advertisements, but only 37% in the advertisements from the United States (see Table 3). However, working women were much more likely to be portrayed as high-level business executives in U.S. advertisements than in Taiwanese advertisements. As shown in Table 3, 10% of the working models were depicted as high-level business executives in advertisements from the United States, but only 2% in Taiwanese advertisements. Hence, in response to the fourth research question, whether types of working women in Taiwanese advertisements differ from those in U.S. advertisements, the results showed that while working women in Taiwanese advertisements were much more likely than those in U.S. advertisements to be portrayed as entertainers, working women were much more likely to appear in high-level business executives in U.S. advertisements than in Taiwanese advertisements.

The fifth research question examined types of non-working roles portrayed by women in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements. Comparing non-working women in U.S. advertisements with those in Taiwanese advertisements, the researcher found that the

type of non-working role was significantly related to the country in which the advertisement appeared ($p < .001$). Looking at Table 4, it appeared that decorative roles accounted for 85% of non-working women in advertisements from Taiwan, while only 78% of non-working women were portrayed as decorative roles in U.S. advertisements. In addition, more U.S. women (13%) were depicted in family setting than Taiwanese women (7%).

Advertisements in 1995 were examined to answer the sixth research question, is women's dress in U.S. advertisements more seductive than that in Taiwanese advertisements. It was found that the type of dress worn by women in the advertisement was significantly related to the country in which the advertisements appeared ($p < .001$). Contrary to expectations, it was found that women's dress in Taiwanese advertisements was more seductive than that in U.S. advertisements. More specifically, seductive dress was worn by 21% of the women in advertisements from Taiwan, but by only 16% of the women in U.S. advertisements (see Table 5). In addition, the partially clad women were 6% higher in Taiwanese advertisements than in U.S. advertisements. Hence, women's dress was found more seductive in Taiwanese advertisements than in U.S. advertisements, even though nude models were shown evenly in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements (2%). On the contrary, 69% of women's dress in advertisements from the United States was depicted in typical dress, compared with only 62% in Taiwanese advertisements.

There was a significant change in the dress worn by female models in Taiwanese advertisements between 1985 and 1995 ($p < .001$). As can be observed from Table 6, the category of typical dress decreased from 77% to 62% from 1985 to 1995, while the category of seductive dress increased from 4% to 21%, partially clad women increased from 10% to 12%, and nude models increased from 1% to 2%. The results indicated an evident increase in the use of women wearing seductive dress in Taiwanese advertisements from 1985 to 1995. Also, for advertisements from the United States, the results showed a significant difference in the dress worn by women between 1985 and 1995 ($p < .001$). As Table 7 indicated, while there was an obvious decrease in the use of typical dress (from 74% to 69%), the use of female models wearing seductive dress increased from 10% in 1985 to 16% in 1995. In addition, there was a slight increase in the use of nude models. However, it should be noted that although in U.S. advertisements the use of female models wearing seductive dress and nude women increased between 1985 and 1995, the percentage of partially clad women decreased by 5. Hence, in response to the seventh research question, from the 1980s to the 1990s have more and more women worn seductive clothes in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements, Table 6 and Table 7 showed that between 1985 and 1995 more and more women were found wearing seductive dress in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements.

Table 1

A Comparison of the Ratio of Working and Non-working Roles Portrayed by Women in Magazine Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. in 1995

Type of role portrayed by women	Taiwan n = 949	U.S. n = 757
Working	27%	21%
Non-working	73	79
$\chi^2(1) = 8.08, p < .01$		

Table 2

A Comparison of the Ratio of Working and Non-working Roles Portrayed by Women in Taiwanese Advertisements between 1985 and 1995

Type of role portrayed by women	1985 n = 487	1995 n = 949
Working	14%	27%
Non-working	86	73
$\chi^2(1) = 30.93, p < .001$		

Table 3

The Distribution of Type of Working Roles Portrayed by Women in Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. in 1995

Type of working role	Taiwan n = 253	U.S. n = 157
High-level business	2%	10%
Professional	29	29
Entertainment	51	37
Middle-level business	16	20
Blue coliar & other	2	4

$\chi^2(4) = 19.55, p < .001$

Table 4

The Distribution of Type of Non-working Roles Portrayed by Women in Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. in 1995

Type of non-working role	Taiwan n = 696	U.S. n = 600
Family	7%	13%
Recreation	7	6
Decorative role	85	78
Other	1	3

$\chi^2(3) = 23.61, p < .001$

Table 5

A Comparison of Type of Dress Worn by Female Models in Advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. in 1995

Type of dress worn by female models	Taiwan n = 949	U.S. n = 757
Typical dress	62%	69%
Seductive dress	21	16
Partially clad	12	6
Nudity	2	2
Can't tell	3	7
$\chi^2(4) = 39.61, p < .001$		

Table 6

A Comparison of Type of Dress Worn by Female Models in Taiwanese Advertisements
between 1985 and 1995

Type of dress worn by female models	1985 n = 487	1995 n = 949
Typical dress	77%	62%
Seductive dress	4	21
Partially clad	10	12
Nudity	1	2
Can't tell	8	3

$\chi^2(4) = 95.13, p < .001$

Table 7

A Comparison of Type of Dress Worn by Female Models in U.S. Advertisements
between 1985 and 1995

Type of dress worn by female models	1985 n = 689	1995 n = 757
Typical dress	74%	69%
Seductive dress	10	16
Partially clad	11	6
Nudity	1	2
Can't tell	4	7

$\chi^2(4) = 36.96, p < .001$

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Advertising contains cultural meanings above and beyond the sales message, and it also reflects the culture to which the advertising is presented (Tawa, 1979). The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of cultural values on portrayals of women in advertising. The linkage between culture and role portrayals was studied by using a cross-cultural approach.

The two countries chosen were the United States and Taiwan. A review of the societal norms regarding women's role in the United States and Taiwan revealed that although the status of women in both countries are inferior to that of men, women in general are more sexually liberated in the United States than they are in Taiwan. As cultural values have a significant influence on advertising, it is logical to expect a significant difference of women's roles as reflected in Taiwan and the U.S. in advertisements.

Results of this study show that in 1995 more female than male models were shown in advertisements from the United States and Taiwan. This finding differs from the findings of Lee and Lin (1995), who analyzed TV commercials in Taiwan and the U.S. and found that Taiwanese advertisements had more adult female models, while U.S. advertisements had more adult males.

According to the finding that more non-working women than working women are found in U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements in the 1990s, it is concluded that women's portrayals shown in 1990s' advertisements misrepresent women's roles in both countries. Despite the fact that there are a lot of working women participating in the nation's work force in the 1990s, unemployed women are still prevailing in Taiwanese and U.S. advertisements. However, although results of this study showed that in advertisements from both countries women are likely to appear more in non-working roles than in working roles, there is a significant difference between the two countries. It was found that more working roles of women appeared in Taiwanese advertisements than in U.S. advertisements, while more non-working female models were shown in U.S. advertisements than in Taiwanese advertisements. Hence, Taiwanese advertisements somehow can more accurately reflect the true diversity of women's roles in society than U.S. advertisements, this study concludes.

The results show that there was an increase of 13% of working female roles from 1985 to 1995 in Taiwanese advertisements, but there was no such change in U.S. advertisements. Hence, the proportionate increase in the use of working women that was found for the eighties in U.S. advertisements (Sullivan & O'Connor, 1988) is not occurring in the nineties. In addition, because the obvious increase in the use of working women was found in Taiwanese advertisements not in U.S. advertisements, this study concludes that Taiwanese advertisements can more accurately reflect the change of women's roles than U.S. advertisements during 1985 through 1995.

Comparing advertisements from the United States and Taiwan, women from the United States were more likely to be seen as high-level business executives, while women portrayed as working roles in Taiwanese advertisements were more likely to be portrayed as entertainers. Among non-working roles, American women were more likely than Taiwanese women to be shown in a family setting. Considering the central role that family and home play in the lives of Taiwanese women, this finding was a little surprising. Moreover, it was found that advertisers in the United States were less likely to show women in decorative roles than Taiwanese advertisers.

Contrary to expectations, it was found that a greater percentage of Taiwanese advertisements used suggestively clad, and partially clad models compared with advertisements from the United States. Although women are more sexually liberated in the United States than they are in Taiwan, it was surprising to find more female models with typical dress in U.S. advertisements than Taiwanese advertisements.

Results of this study showed that from 1985 to 1995 there has been an increase in the use of female models wearing seductive clothes in advertisements from Taiwan and the United States, corroborating the findings of Soley and Kurzbard (1986) and Ferguson et al. (1990). There has been an increase in the use of suggestively clad, partially clad and nude models in Taiwanese advertisements from 1985 to 1995, while there was a significant decrease of 15% of female models with typical dress in 1995 as compared to 1985. Although less partially clad models appeared in U.S. advertisements in 1995 than in 1985, there has been an increase of 6% of female models with seductive dress.

Moreover, there was a slight increase in nude models (1%) in U.S. advertisements between 1985 and 1995. The percentage of female models with seductive clothes increased from 22% (10% for seductive dress, 11% for partially clad model, and 1% for nude model) in 1985 to 24% (16% for seductive dress, 6% for partially clad model, and 2% for nude model) in 1995, while women with typical dress decreased from 74% to 69%. Overall, female models' dress in U.S. advertisements was more seductive in 1995 than 1985.

In conclusion, differences between U.S. and Taiwanese advertisements were found in the type of working roles, type of non-working roles portrayed by women and dress worn by female models, while more female models and non-working women than male models and working women were found in both countries. In addition, the comparison between 1985 and 1995 revealed that more and more working roles have been portrayed by women in Taiwanese advertisements, and female models' dress has been more seductive in Taiwanese advertisements. The obvious decrease of female models with typical dress and the slight increase of women wearing seductive clothes indicated that women's dress has become more seductive in U.S. advertisements.

Contribution

Although since the late 1960s there have been numerous studies dealing with women's portrayals in advertisements, most of them examined only advertisements from the United States. Consequently, they were not able to account for women's roles in other countries' advertisements. This cross-cultural study, unlike previous studies,

sought to determine whether advertising reflects general differences between two cultures' views on the role of women. In addition, it examined advertisements in Taiwan and the U.S. to see how women were portrayed between 1985 and 1995. Hence, this study compared advertisements in Taiwan with those in the U.S. to see the changes of women's portrayals in advertisements within 10 years.

Limitation of this Study

This study only examined Taiwanese and U.S. advertisements from three different magazine categories: general interest, women's and business magazines since there was no men's magazine in Taiwan until 1987. However, the limitation that men's magazine was excluded from coding may bias the results. Women's portrayals in men's magazines may differ from those in other types of magazines, but the difference was not considered in the present study.

Suggestions for Future Research

Women's portrayals in magazine advertisements were examined in this cross-cultural study. However, the present study can be extended to see how women are portrayed in other type of media. Furthermore, men's portrayals shown in advertisements deserve the same attention as women's portrayals analyzed in this study. Future researchers can analyze advertisements from different countries to see the influence of cultural values on portrayals of men in advertisements.

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Appendix

Number ____

Coding Sheet**The Portrayal in Magazine Ads****General Information**

- a. Nation __ 1. Taiwan 2. U.S.
- b. Year __ 1. 1985 2. 1995
- c. Type of the magazine __ 1. General interest 2. Business 3. Women's
- d. Sex of the model __ 1. male 2. female

Roles of the female model

- a. Role __ 1. work 2. non-work
- b. Working role __ 1. high-level business 2. professional 3. entertainment 4. mid-level business 5. non-professional white collar 6. blue-collar 7. other
- c. Non-working role __ 1. family 2. recreational 3. decorative 4. other
- d. Dress ____ 1. typical dress 2. seductive 3. partially clad 4. nudity 5. can't tell